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Review

Inside Information

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Inside This "INSIDE"

	Page
Former FmHA Information and Legislative Officer Dies	2
Agricultural Cooperative Service Has New Directories for Sale	2
U.S. Governmentwide World Food Day Planning Gets Underway	2
Government Accounting Office Examines the CID Service	3
Research Communication Plan Aired at ESCOP Meeting in Minnesota	3
USDA Launching Info Project on Agricultural Biotechnology	4
USDA's Computerized Info Delivery Service Audience Broadens	4
Office of Gov't Ethics Releases Final Rules for Fed Employees	5
OPA's Photo Division News Includes New Library Section Head	5
Oklahoma State University Offering Two CITD Programs	5
Congressional Bills May Make GPO the On-Line Clearinghouse	6
USDA's Office of Public Affairs Gets New Deputy Director	6
Federal Electronic Mail System Connects Ag Communicators	6
Deputy Chief of USDA-OPA's Publishing Division Retires	7
Upcoming Communication Events and Training Opportunities	8

INSIDE INFORMATION is published for distribution to public affairs and information staff members of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, its agencies, State Departments of Agriculture and Land Grant Universities. Individual items are sent electronically throughout the month to offices on the agricultural information network. These items are then printed at the end of the month for distribution to all offices, including those which do not have access to electronic mail. Any items, comments or inquiries should be sent to Denver Browning, Editor, Information Technology Management Staff, Office of Public Affairs, Room 536-A, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250, or send to Browning's FTS2000 (AT&T) mailbox !A13DBROWNING, or call at 202-720-2058. Communicators with USDA Agencies, Land Grant Universities and State Departments of Agriculture are encouraged to submit items to the editor for inclusion in both the electronic and printed versions.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Although timely in the electronic version, some job announcements may reach you too late in hard copy due to the shortness of deadlines. Our policy is to include all electronic items in the end-of-month hard copy.

FORMER FMHA INFORMATION AND LEGISLATIVE OFFICER DIES

Fred E. McGhee, Jr., 76, a retired information and legislative officer with USDA's Farmers Home Administration (FmHA), died on August 1, of leukemia.

He was an authority on agricultural credit, and had worked at USDA for 20 years when he retired in 1985. He was the author of "Brief History," a history of the FmHA.

McGhee joined Webster Communications after retiring and edited its national Agricultural Credit Letter.

A native of Missouri, he joined KGBX-Radio in Springfield as a news editor, sports editor, writer, and broadcaster in 1933. In 1944, he moved to New York and worked as a writers, assistant news editor, and broadcast operations specialist for NBC News.

He came to Washington in 1960 and joined USDA in 1965.

**AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE SERVICE HAS NEW DIRECTORIES FOR SALE**

USDA's Agricultural Cooperative Service (ACS) has two directories for sale among its other new publications.

The "Directory of Farmer Cooperatives" is the eighth edition of a directory first published by the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives and now by the ACS. The 110-page directory contains a state-by-state listing of more than 300 farmer-owned marketing, farm supply, service, and bargaining cooperatives.

All pertinent contact information on individual cooperatives is listed, at a cost of \$5. Ask for Service Report 22.

The "Directory of U.S. Agricultural Cooperative Exporters," Service Report 21, is available for \$2. The 49-page directory is divided into two sections, an index by product type and an alphabetical listing of cooperatives, including contact information. The directory lists 114 cooperatives or their marketing agencies.

Make checks or money orders payable to Agricultural Cooperative Service, and mail to P.O. Box 96576, Washington, DC 20090-6576.

**U.S. GOVERNMENTWIDE WORLD FOOD DAY PLANNING GETS UNDERWAY**

Representatives from 14 federal departments and agencies met recently to coordinate plans for the 1992 World Food Day observance, October 16.

USDA is represented in the planning group by Doug Adair, public liaison director in the Office of Public Affairs. Others involved include representatives from the U.S. National Committee for World Food Day and the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization.

The theme for this year's World Food Day is "Nutrition: The Bridge Between Food and Health." Included in the materials the group reviewed was a copy of the President's World Food Day Proclamation, background information on World Food Day, background on the World Food Prize, and information on the new food pyramid developed by USDA.

For more information about World Food Day plans, contact Doug Adair at 202-720-2798, or write him at Room 112-A, OPA, USDA, Washington, DC 20250.



GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTING OFFICE EXAMINES THE CID SERVICE

At the February 1991 request of Senator John Glenn, chairman of the Committee on Governmental Affairs, General Accounting Office staff examined electronic information dissemination processes at four federal agencies.

USDA's CID Service was one of the four selected, the fourth time GAO examined the CID Service. GAO released its report July, 1992. USDA's CID Service leads the report, followed by:

- the bibliographic database operated by the National Technical Information Service;
- services provided by the Census Bureau; and
- MEDLARS, operated by the National Library of Medicine.

The 47-page report is of an information-seeking nature, rather than "investigative." It simply describes the services, their users, means by which the agencies involved assure integrity of their data, costs for each service and prices paid by users.

The report is titled "Information Dissemination. Case Studies on Electronic Dissemination at Four Agencies."

GAO did not attempt to evaluate the services' effectiveness or efficiency.

The services examined are all different so there's no comparison to be made between them. CID comes off good for its relatively small cost, \$27,540 total in 1991 for the loading and distribution of thousands of pages of USDA research and reports, down from \$66,339 in 1988.

Costs for the NTIS database increased by \$100,000 in 1991 over 1990 and revenues fell by \$332,363, according to GAO figures. The database is supposed to be self-supporting.

Census distributes information online through two vendors but GAO focused on Census's distribution of information on tapes, floppy disks and CD-ROM. Their revenue from those sales almost doubled from \$748,793 in 1988 to \$1,402,719 in 1990.

The National Library of Medicine operates an online database used almost 85% by hospitals, practitioners, educators, students and researchers. NLM made \$1,080,069 "profit" in 1989, on production costs of \$12,329,658.

NTIS handles the billing to subscribers of NLM's MEDLAR database. NLM pays NTIS 9% -- \$1,174,770 in 1989 -- of everything NTIS bills, but NTIS apparently has trouble collecting from many of the NLM customers.

You can get a single copy of the report, "GAO/IMTEC-92-6FS," free by calling 202-275-6241. Additional copies are \$2 each.

**RESEARCH COMMUNICATION PLAN AIRED AT ESCOP MEETING IN MINNESOTA**

Dave King, head of communication services at Purdue University in Indiana, joined J. Patrick Jordan, administrator of USDA's Cooperative State Research Service, in presenting a summary of a new draft communication plan at a meeting of the Experiment Stations Committee on Policy (ESCOP) in Minneapolis, MN, August 4-6.

The communication plan was developed under King's direction as CSRS's part of the overall CSRS/ESCOP strategic plan for research communications. ESCOP members were asked to make any further input to the draft plan through King, immediate past president of the Agricultural Communicators in Education (ACE).

A major highlight of the ESCOP meeting was a joint workshop session with the Extension Committee on Policy (ECOP) which emphasized public image enhancement of the state experiment station and cooperative extension service systems.

The workshop -- organized by Z. L. Carpenter, director of the Texas Agricultural Extension Service, and J. R. Fischer, director of the South Carolina Experiment Station -- began with summaries of the research and extension communication task force reports.

John Paluszek of Ketchum Public Relations in New York spoke about the land grant system in a changing world including perspectives, images, and reputations.

Janet Poley, director of communication, information and technology for USDA's Extension Service, briefed the attendees on the electronic communication network.

CSRS Administrator Jordan said the results of the workshop reinforced the commitment to cooperation among USDA agencies including the Agricultural Research Service, Cooperative State Research Service and Extension Service, and to increased links to Forest Service, Economic Research Service and other appropriate agencies of USDA.

"Strengthening of cooperation with ESCOP and ECOP was also given a firm commitment," said Jordan. "We have a common message with a very specific submessage regarding the land grant institutions."



USDA LAUNCHING INFO PROJECT ON AGRICULTURAL BIOTECHNOLOGY

USDA's Office of Agricultural Biotechnology will soon begin coordinating an information and education effort in support of biotechnology.

Marci Hilt has been temporarily detailed to OAB to help with the effort. She has been a public affairs specialist with USDA's Office of Public Affairs for a number of years, first with the News Division and more recently with the Radio and Television Division.

For more information on the project and what they expect to accomplish in the next few months, contact Marci Hilt at 703-235-4419, or write to her at USDA, OAB, Room 1001, Rosslyn Plaza East, Arlington, VA 22209.



USDA'S COMPUTERIZED INFO DELIVERY SERVICE AUDIENCE BROADENS

More and more, news and information services are going directly to the end user, bypassing the "daily newspaper reporter" to get information directly to people who need it to make business decisions before the papers come out.

Virtually all major wire services operate one or more online services, that let people get news and information directly through their own computers, whether in their office, home or on a business trip.

In the past decade, online services have been inventing themselves to make use of new computer-driven technology to sell information. They're out there now, competing with each other to distribute USDA and other information distributed through USDA's computerized information delivery (CID) Service.

CID subscribers now buy almost one million lines of USDA information a month, much of it for further distribution to their own thousands of subscribers. Here are some examples.

The August issue of "Successful Farming" says there's a major battle underway for "control" of information systems reaching farmers. The magazine said two companies dominate the field that provides market and news "screens" by radio and satellite signals.

They are DTN (Data Transmission Network) and FarmDayta2, from Broadcast Partners, the article said. Broadcast Partners was formed by Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Farmland Industries and the Illinois Farm Bureau. DTN, Pioneer and the Illinois Farm Bureau all subscribe to USDA's CID Service.

The magazine said FarmDayta2, which started in March 1991, has 14,000 subscribers. That system operates from satellite transmission and is available in color or black and white. FarmDayta2's basic subscription gives subscribers 250-300 pages of data A DAY, for a basic price in black and white of \$26.67 a month, their sales office said. Subscribers can buy more with additional fees. FarmDayta2 has another service that allows FarmDayta2 to distribute specific information to suppliers and dealers. Yet another service shows detailed weather information with hourly updates.

DTN, which started in 1985, has about 60,000 subscribers and plans to introduce color this year. DTN transmits its data using two systems, the article said. One is an FM radio transmission, received over hardware DTN provides. The other is satellite. DTN offers 127 pages A DAY for \$22.90 per month, said their sales office.

A third service -- also a CID subscriber -- that recently stepped up its competition is SCIDATA, an online service operated by Sparks Agribusiness Information Systems, Inc. It offers dial-up access that lets users retrieve data "without leaving your spreadsheet," reports their newsletter. "You no longer have to remember cryptic file names ... A few simple keystrokes in your Lotus spreadsheet lets you retrieve one or

more data series just as if someone had hand-keyed the table."

These services happen to be agriculture oriented. There are 5,000 online services operating in the United States today, up from 3,000 just a couple of years ago. Those who want to move information, do it on-line.



OFFICE OF GOV'T ETHICS RELEASES FINAL RULES FOR FED EMPLOYEES

The final version of rules defining ethical standards for all federal employees has been released by the Office of Government Ethics (OGE).

Officially titled "Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch," it covers everything from office gifts to possible conflicts of interest. However, OGE has set aside the proposed controversial restriction on use of official time for professional association activities (See related article in INSIDE INFORMATION, March 1992).

Recognizing a threat to the existence of professional associations, nearly 800 of 1,000 comments OGE received after its proposed version was released in July 1991 focused on Section 806. The section said federal employees should not conduct the internal business of associations at the office. Two other sections, 704 and 705, covering the use of government property -- telephones, photocopiers, fax machines -- posed a similar threat.

The final version of the ethics rule was softened by OGE to show such uses are permissible.



OPA'S PHOTO DIVISION NEWS INCLUDES NEW LIBRARY SECTION HEAD

Ben Jones has been selected head of the Library Section of the Photography Division in USDA's Office of Public Affairs.

Jones, while at the Department of Defense, was part of the Pentagon Staff involved in exploring digital photography which the Army is using exclusively.

The Photography Division also is reviewing applications for the Photo Reproduction/Review Head and photojournalists positions.

Also in Photography Division, Larry Rana has completed work in connection with USDA's Forest Service photographic coverage of Opportunity LA, a temporary work program initiated by the USDA Task Force to aid the unemployed in Los Angeles.

Rana interviewed program participants, instructors, and the supervisor of the Angeles National Forest, producing four "USDA On-Line" radio actualities and two 3-1/2 minute "Consumer Time" news stories. The stories featured the Opportunity LA program and another Forest Service initiative involving planting trees, landscaping, and gardening in the riot torn areas of East Los Angeles.

For more information call Rana at 202-720-2010.



OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY OFFERING TWO CITD PROGRAMS

The Center for International Trade Development (CITD) is a public-private partnership providing international trade services to growing and middle-market companies. It is housed at the Oklahoma State University campus and draws on resources of the university. CITD provides companies with direct assistance for global trade issues.

Through company-tailored programs, CITD professionals can assist industrial, agribusiness, and service companies with establishing overseas sales and distribution, license agreements, joint ventures, and other international trade mechanisms.

Programs presented by CITD's Seminar and Workshop Division enable managers to sharpen international business skills and stay abreast of dynamic changes in world markets.

October 4-10, CITD will present the "Russian Language and Culture Camp," an intensive one-week program modeled from successful Department of Defense training programs. It concentrates on the language and culture of the Commonwealth of Independent States and the former Soviet republics, using the latest interactive computer technology. Program leaders are experienced foreign language staff from CITD, the Air Force Academy, and native speakers, all trained in the use of the latest interactive computer technology.

October 12-16, CITD will present "Export Management Specialist Program," one week of intensive training that covers all facets of exporting. It was especially created to furnish all the necessary background for the person with a limited amount of experience in international trade.

For more information contact: Linda Allen (Russian Camp) or Brian Gauler (Export Management Specialist Program), Center for International Trade Development, Hall of Fame & Washington, Stillwater, OK 74078. Telephone is 405-744-7693 or fax 405-744-8973.



CONGRESSIONAL BILLS MAY MAKE GPO THE ON-LINE CLEARINGHOUSE

According to Congressman Major Owens (NY), "Americans spend more than \$250 million a year to support collection and reproduction of information by the Census Bureau, but if they want electronic, on-line access to that taxpayer-financed information, they must now pay \$42 an hour to a commercial provider. That is wrong."

Congressional legislation is moving forward to create an electronic gateway at the U.S. Government Printing Office that would give the public access to a variety of federal databases at low cost and a one-stop-shopping approach.

Last summer, Congressman Charlie Rose (NC) introduced a House version and this year in June, Senator Al Gore Jr. (TN), introduced a Senate version. According to sources, the Gore Bill was written with the staff of the House Administration Committee which Rose chairs, and Rose endorsed it.

If Gore's Bill passes, GPO would be required to provide the Congressional Record and the Federal Register as the first information sources through the gateway, and to make them available within one year.

Gore's proposal recommends standardizing different database formats used by federal agencies, making electronic access easier for users.

Before the gateway is fully utilized, GPO could provide an interim service, offering an electronic directory of databases that are available from individual federal agencies and private companies and how to sign up for them.



USDA'S OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS GETS NEW DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Doug Adair, previously director of public liaison in USDA's Office of Public Affairs, has been promoted to deputy director for public affairs. He replaces Eric Ruff.

Ruff, a former legislative assistant for Senator Ted Stevens (AK) and deputy communications director at the Republican National Committee, has been named director of public affairs at the Department of Commerce.

Ruff first came to USDA to serve as deputy director to Publishing and Visual Communication Director Susan Fertig-Dyks.



FEDERAL ELECTRONIC MAIL SYSTEM CONNECTS AG COMMUNICATORS

The federal government's electronic mail system, known as FTS2000MAIL, and its gateways to other e-mail systems is allowing USDA public affairs and information offices to communicate electronically with each other once again.

The new e-mail interconnectivity is nearing the level of the mid-1980s when all USDA agency and land grant university information offices -- and many state departments of agriculture information offices -- were on one public e-mail network (the Dialcom system).

Although nearly every USDA agency is now listed in the national FTSMail directory, the number of active users varies by agency.

The information technology staff in USDA's Office of Public Affairs recently checked identified communicators' FTSMail userIDs.

Soil Conservation Service's public affairs staff, with 20 active userIDs (including 3 regional information officers), led all other agencies and offices in accessing the FTSMail system. SCS state public affairs specialists were not surveyed by OPA.

OPA itself had 18 userIDs responding to the July 22 electronic survey. The News Division leads other OPA units with 8 active users of FTSMail. The OPA information technology staff has 5 active users.

The Agricultural Research Service information staff has at least 7 active FTSMail users, including 2 field information offices. The Food Safety & Inspection Service's external affairs staff had 4 respondents to the OPA check, including 3 regional information officers. Farmers Home Administration's public information staff has 3 active users.

Other agency public affairs/information offices with at least one active FTSMail user, according to the OPA check, are: Agricultural Marketing Service, Agricultural Stabilization & Conservation Service, Economics Management Staff, Federal Crop Insurance Corporation, Federal Grain Inspection Service, Food & Nutrition Service, Human Nutrition Information Service, National Agricultural Statistics Service, National Agricultural Library, Office of International Cooperation & Development, Packers & Stockyards Administration, and Rural Electrification Administration.

Extension Service and Cooperative State Research Service, along with most land grant university information offices, use the Internet e-mail system -- which interconnects with the FTSMail system. Already OPA and others are exchanging electronic messages with ES, CSRS and state extension and experiment station communication offices.

FTSMail also has a gateway with private domain e-mail systems, such as the ones used by the Forest Service and Foreign Agricultural Service. Again, messages are being exchanged between OPA and both FS and FAS information offices, including some FS regional and research station information offices.

OPA will be distributing a list of all FTSMail, Internet and other system e-mail addresses to all agency public affairs/information offices by early September. Those on the FTSMail system can also access the list from the OPA shared folder, !OPA:AGINFO.

The new updated list of USDA information contacts in the "How to Get Information from USDA" due out by October also will have the latest e-mail addresses.

In the meantime, for additional information about the FTSMail system and/or interconnects with the Internet or other systems, contact Stan Prochaska, Info Technology & Resource Management Staff, OPA, Room 536-A, FTSMail !A13SPROCHASK (Internet mail address A13SPROCHASK@ATTMAIL.COM), or call him at 202-720-7454.



DEPUTY CHIEF OF USDA-OPA'S PUBLISHING DIVISION RETIRES

Frank Samay, deputy chief of the Publishing Division in USDA's Office of Public Affairs, retired on August 27.

Samay came to USDA after many years with the U.S. Government Printing Office, and has worked in the Publishing Division for 14 years.

He retires with 28 years of service.



UPCOMING COMMUNICATION EVENTS AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

September 11-24:

MULTIMEDIA/EXPO 92

Miami, Florida, Inter-Continental Hotel, September 11

New Orleans, Louisiana, Hilton Riverside & Towers, September 18

Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Exposition/Convention Center, September 24

Contact: 1-800-423-1715 (Registration Fee is \$45 per person)

September 14 - October 30:

ADVANCED WRITING AND INTERVIEWING TWO-DAY WORKSHOPS

Calgary, Canada, Delta Bow Valley Hotel, September 14-15

Vancouver, Canada, Hotel Georgia, September 17-18

San Francisco, California, Sir Francis Drake Hotel, September 21-22

Los Angeles, California, Hyatt at LA Airport, September 24-25

Denver, Colorado, Radisson Hotel, September 29-30

Detroit, Michigan, The Dearborn Inn, October 8-9

New York, New York, Hotel Dorset, October 12-13

Washington, D.C., Wyndham Bristol, October 15-16

Chicago, Illinois, The Talbott Hotel, October 19-20

Columbus, Ohio, Holiday Inn-Airport, October 21-22

Boston, Massachusetts, Back Bay Hilton, October 26-27

Whippany, New Jersey, Marriott's Hanover Courtyard, October 29-30

Contact: Effective Communications Group, 201-444-3147

September 29 - October 2:

CD-ROM EXPO SHOW

World Trade Center, Boston, Massachusetts

Contact: 800-945-3313 or 617-361-0817

October 21:

AGRICULTURAL COMMUNICATORS IN EDUCATION LUNCHEON

Speaker: Betty Debnam, Editor of The Washington Post's Mini-Page

Valley Room, USDA Administration Building

Contact: Kathryn Hill, 202-690-4750

November 4:

REFRIGERATOR JOURNALISM: Making Your Writing More Useful and Usable

Live Satellite Conference from the University of Missouri-Columbia

Contact: 314-882-4038 or fax 314-882-1953

January 14-16, 1993:

NAGC 1992 NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS SCHOOL

Old Colony Inn, Alexandria, Virginia

Contact: Debbie Trocchi, 703-519-3902

May 8-12, 1993:

AGRICULTURAL COMMUNICATORS IN EDUCATION INTERNAT'L MEETING

Theme: "ACE '93, Discover New Worlds"

Hotel Intercontinental on Biscayne Bay, Miami, Florida

Contact: Donald Poucher, 904-392-0437 or Thomas Hintz, 904-392-5180

